view of this, it is not possible to indicate any specific time frame for setting up of new LPG distributorships. Government has advised OMCs to concentrate their future expansion plans in semi-urban and rural areas in the country.

As on 1.1.2006, OMCs had set up 1063 and 1163 distributorships in rural and urban-rural areas respectively in the country. OMCs have taken steps such as introducing 5 kg cylinders and setting up community kitchens to enhance the use of LPG in uncovered areas. OMCs have also finalized a common industry marketing plan covering 791 locations for setting up LPG distributorships mainly in rural and urban-rural (semi-urban) locations.

Introduction of 5 KG Cylinders

†2331. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to introduce 5 kg. cylinders keeping in view the difficulty in carrying load in hilly and inaccessible areas;

(b) if so, whether the light weight cylinders had been introduced; and

(c) whether such cylinders have proved effective and they are still in use or their use has been discontinued?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have introduced 5 Kg domestic LPG cylinders with effect from August, 2002 in order to meet the demand of low-income groups in urban, semi-urban and rural pockets and also extend the reach of LPG to the hilly terrain and interior areas on account of convenience in transportation. 5 kg cylinders are still in use, and as on 1.1.2006, there are 2.98 lakh LPG customers of such cylinders.

Distribution of Kerosene

2332. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to evolve a policy for the distribution of kerosene to the poor sections of the society;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.